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SERVICE OF CUBAN VOLUNTEERS IN U. S. ARMED FORCES

PURPOSE

The policy of the United States Government is to assist Cuban exiles now in this country to maintain themselves and to usefully employ and further develop their individual skills and abilities. One of the career opportunities to be made available to them is service in the U. S. armed forces to the extent permissible under existing statutes.

It is the purpose of this plan to provide for the entry of individual Cubans into the armed forces, with the clear understanding that they are not being prepared as a combat force.

NUMBER OF VOLUNTEERS

Of the approximately 25,000 Cuban exiles now in the United States, it is estimated that the number of volunteers of military age to be dealt with under this plan will not be more than 2,000 and may be as few as 800.

METHOD OF ENTRY

The existing mechanisms of the U. S. Selective Service System will be utilized to provide for induction into all services of Cuban volunteers between the ages of 18 and 26 as they become identified and available. The Department of Defense, in collaboration with the Department of Health, Education and Welfare, will determine the approximate number of volunteers to be processed and will provide the U. S. Selective Service System with

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DOES NOT APPLY

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quotas for forwarding to local induction boards. Coordination with Selective Service Headquarters and local induction boards will be required.

Each service will provide at least one person full time to the Cuban Refugee Emergency Center in Miami and will issue appropriate instructions to recruiting offices, particularly in New York, Chicago and Los Angeles, to provide assistance to Cuban exiles who wish to volunteer for induction.

ENLISTMENT

Enlistment in age groups from 27 to 31 in the regular Navy and in age groups from 27 to 28 in the regular Marine Corps of Cuban volunteers who are eligible as provided below is directed.

Preliminary processing of these individuals will be conducted by the Selective Service System in the same manner as for voluntary inductees.

ELIGIBILITY

The current physical, mental and moral standards for induction of U. S. citizens will be applied. For volunteers who do not speak English, initial screening for mental qualifications will make use of Army tests given in Spanish.

Doctors, dentists and allied specialists not over 35 years of age whose personal and professional qualifications can be established will be eligible for commissioning in the Armed Forces of the United States without component. Once commissioned such officers will be placed on active duty with appropriate U. S. units.

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LANGUAGE TRAINING

For those volunteers who do not already possess sufficient fluency in English, eight weeks of English language training to include not less than 240 hours of instruction and an English language fluency battery test will be provided prior to induction. This training which will not be limited to prospective military personnel will be carried out under civilian auspices directed by the Department of Health, Education and Welfare. In order to provide special instruction in military terms and nomenclature for those trainees who are candidates for military service, the Army will furnish an experienced language instructor to participate in the final thirty hours of instruction.

SECURITY

Screening of volunteers for induction will include a background investigation, making use of the files of the Immigration and Naturalization Service and supplemented where necessary by a polygraph examination. This screening will be conducted by the service for which the volunteer is earmarked and will normally be completed during the period of language training, and in any event completed prior to induction or enlistment.

In view of the difficulty of conducting complete background investigations, the granting of access to classified material to Cuban volunteers on duty with the armed forces will be held to a minimum.

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USE IN THE ARMED FORCES

The individual choice of eligible volunteers will initially govern their distribution among the military services. Should it become necessary for the good of the services, the Secretary of Defense will establish quotas to control this distribution.

Assignment after induction will be in accordance with the needs of the services but, having due regard for the abilities and special aptitudes of the individual, each service will provide the most advanced training possible. With the exception of assignments requiring access to classified information, which should be made only for compelling reasons, Cuban personnel will be available for training and assignment anywhere in the military services but only within the continental United States.

The services will encourage qualified individuals to apply for specialized training, as for example, Army Special Forces training. To the extent that such advanced individual training can be administered without requiring security clearances, those who apply will be given this specialized training and then where necessary returned to their parent organizations.

PUBLIC RELATIONS AND MORALE

The difficult circumstances which have led to the presence of large numbers of Cuban exiles in the United States may be reflected in individual morale problems. The services must be aware of this possibility and take all reasonable measures and precautions to deal with it.

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This program has been developed in collaboration with the Department of Health, Education and Welfare, as a Department of Defense contribution to the broad effort to assist the Cuban exile population. Accordingly public announcement of this effort, including the role of the Department of Defense, will be undertaken by the Department of Health, Education and Welfare.

COSTS

The principal costs in this plan are those of providing pre-induction language training and security screening. Language training costs will be funded by the Department of Health, Education and Welfare.

Additional costs for security screening, the assignment of military language instructors and liaison personnel with the Refugee Emergency Center in Miami have not been separately computed since they are not considered sufficiently large to require special Budgetary provisions.

IMPLEMENTATION

This program will be instituted within thirty days.